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**From Neutrality to Alignment:  
Portugal in the Foundation of the Atlantic Pact**

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**DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY AND CIVILIZATION**

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**From Neutrality to Alignment:  
Portugal in the Foundation of the Atlantic Pact**

**NUNO SEVERIANO TEIXEIRA**

**'Security, Economy and Politics during the 1950's' '**  
**Research Project directed by Professor Werner Abelshauser**  
**Project Paper no. 3/91**

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# 1. Introduction:

The subject of Portugal and the Atlantic Pact has been approached both from the diplomatic and political, the strategic and military point of view, whenever the international situation or Portuguese foreign policy have brought the question to light.

The same cannot be said about the historical approach to the problem, especially with regard to the birth and the first steps of the Atlantic Alliance.

For a long time now, French, English and North American historiographies<sup>1</sup> have been studying the subject with regard to both its general aspects and also more specifically, to different national cases. And today, countries other than great powers which played a major role in forging the pact are being studied – i.e. Italy and the Scandinavian countries<sup>2</sup>. The situation of such countries is similar to that of Portugal,

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. historiographic production up to the eighties, Colin Gordon, **The Atlantic Alliance : a bibliography**, London/New York, 1978. The recent historiography (79 and the eighties) will be referred along the work.

<sup>2</sup> On Italy the production is numerous. Cf. in chronological order: Mario Toscano, "Appunti sui negoziati per la partecipazione dell' Italia al Patto Atlantico", in, **Storia e Politica**, VI, 1962, n° 1, p.p.1/37 and n° 2, p.p.196/231, republished in Mario Toscano, **Pagine di Storia Diplomatica Contemporanea**, Vol. II, **Origine e Vicende della Seconda Guerra Mondiale**, Milano, 1973; G. Di Capua, **Come l'Italia aderì al Patto Atlantico** Roma, 1971; P. Pastorelli, "L' Adesione dell' Italia al Patto Atlantico", in **Storia Contemporanea**, XIV, 1983, n° 6, p.p.1015/1030, republished in, G. Rossini (a cura di ) **De Gasperi e l' età del Centrisimo**, Rma, 1984, p.p. 75/94; H. Timothy Smith, "The Fear of Subversion: The United States and inclusion of Italy in Nothern Atlantic Treaty", in **Diplomatic History**, VII, 1983, n° 2, p.p.139/155; Antonio Varsori, "La scelta Occidentale dell' Italia" (1948-1949), in **Storia delle Relazioni Internazionali**, Anno I, 1985, n° 1, p.p.95/159 and n° 2, p.p.303/368; Paolo Emilio Taviani, "Come l' Italia entrò nell Patto Atlantico: mitologia e storia", in **La Scelta Atlantica**, Roma, s/d; and very recently Antonio Lamberti, "L' Adesione Italiana al Patto Atlantico", in Luigi Corsi/Antonio Lamberti, **Il Trauma della Nato**, Firenze, 1 989, p.p.29/41.

On the Scandinavian countries case Cf. Sven Hennings, "Searching for the Security in the North-Denmark's road to Nato" e Grehe Vaernø "Fate of the North Option – the absence of guarantees for a Scandinavian defense association turns Norway firmly towards the Atlantic Alliance", in André De Staercke, **Nato's Anxious Birth**, New York, 1985, p.p 42/52 and 87/94. Recently a reinterpretation of the problem in Annie Lacroix Riz, "L' Entrée de la Scandinavie dans le Pacte Atlantique (1943-1949)", in **Guerres Mondiales et Conflits Contemporaines**, n° 149, Jan. 1988, p.p.52/92; and more recntly, Poul Villaume, "Neither Appeasement nor Servility: Denmark and the Atlantic Alliance, 1949-55", in **Scandinavian Journal of History**, vol. 14, 1989, n° 2, pp.155 a 179.



although, the Portuguese case has not yet been dealt with in any great detail.

The main scope of this work is, then, to study the position of Portugal in the international situation that leads to the foundation of the Atlantic Pact, and Portugal's role as a founder member within this.

In general and regardless of the political position of the various authors, the historiographical approaches to the Portuguese case have been influenced by two types of constraints, one of a practical and the other of a theoretical nature. The former is connected with the difficulty in consulting the documentation, still not available to the general public today. The latter is related to two assumptions that have markedly influenced the results. First, the tendency to stress the role of the statesman regardless of the "deep forces", to use Renouvin and Duroselle's concept<sup>3</sup>. Second, the fact that Portugal has been considered, if not isolated in the international scene, at least completely autonomous regarding its positions on foreign policy. That is, the historiographies concentrate exclusively on the political and diplomatic positions of Salazar, neglecting both the internal and external factors. They tend to forget that Portugal is a small power, strongly influenced by its own geo-political position and subject to the changing external pressures imposed on it by the international scene. In this work, although the role of the statesman is not denied, an attempt is made to place it within its limits: these being, at an external level, the international scene and the importance of the geo-strategical and geo-political position of Portuguese territory. At an internal level, these factors include the position of the armed forces and the various political forces, in both the Regime and the opposition regarding Portugal's joining the Pact.

The documents used in this work include four fundamental sources: the diplomatic documents exchanged during negotiations, belonging today to the Archives of the Foreign Affairs Ministry (not for public consultation); official documents published in the "Diários do Governo" and in the minutes of the sessions of the "Assembleia Nacional" and the "Câmara Corporativa"; the contemporary press reports; the memoirs, diaries and other records left by the military, diplomats and politicians involved in the negotiations.

Three main issues to be developed will be:

1 – A short review of the national historiographic production, reviewing the present stand-point of the problem.

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. Pierre Renouvin/Jean-Baptiste Duroselle, *Introduction à l' Histoire des Relations Internationales*, Paris, 1964.

2 – the external conditions – the international background and the situation that leads to the foundation of the Pact and its effects on Portugal.

3 – the Portuguese response to international developments, that is, the difficult and long process of decision-making that leads Portugal to join the Pact, influencing both its foreign policy and the future of the regime.

## 2 . Portuguese Historiography:

The first work on the subject is by Henrique Martins de Carvalho in his book "Portugal e o Pacto do Atlântico"<sup>4</sup>. Published in 1953, shortly after the historic Lisbon meeting of the Atlantic Council (February 1952). In spite of the fact that it is so close to the event, this text is still today the most exhaustive and thorough study available and is also the only one that does not share the assumptions referred to previously entirely. The author interprets not only the international scene but also the Portuguese position from a geo-strategical and geo-political approach. To Martins de Carvalho it is not only the Russian threat that forces the birth of the Atlantic Alliance as a solution to the defense problem of the Western World. It is however, the geo-strategic position of Portuguese territory and the Cold War which explain the invitation to Lisbon to join the Pact and, in fact, Portugal's participation in this Western defense plan. It should be added that, this complex situation obliges Portugal to join the Alliance instead of making a mere bilateral agreement with the U.S.A. and the United Kingdom.

Recently, various works have been published, some studying the problem partially, others in a summary form. They all differ in their theoretical approaches as well as in their political standpoints.

Albano Nogueira has published an article in the *Revue de l'OTAN* on the subject "La naissance de l'Alliance, une perspective Portugaise"<sup>5</sup>. Based on an exclusively diplomatic approach, the work is centred on Portuguese foreign policy, and particularly on Salazar's political views

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<sup>4</sup> Henrique Martins de Carvalho, *Portugal e o Pacto do Atlântico*, Lisboa, 1953.

<sup>5</sup> Albano Nogueira, "La naissance de l'Alliance, une perspective Portugaise", *Revue de l'Otan*, Oct. 1980, p. 8/13. Republished under the title "The Pull of the Continent – Portugal votes for a European as well as an Atlantic Role", in De Staercke, op cit. p.p. 68/75.



and diplomacy concerning the foundation of the Alliance and the inclusion of Portugal. In spite of the reservations put forward, of the internal contradictions and of the unenthusiastic climate during negotiations, Portugal finally joined the alliance. After summarizing the diplomatic process, Albano Nogueira attempts an interpretation of Salazar's position. According to him, Portuguese membership, was more than a political position, a moral duty. It was an ethical obligation, a "crusade" against communism in defense of Western Christian Civilization.

José Medeiros Ferreira has also dedicated an article to the problem, entitled "As Ditaduras Ibéricas e a Fundação da Aliança Atlântica"<sup>6</sup>, later republished in *Um século de Problemas – as relações luso-espanholas da União Ibérica à Comunidade Europeia*. And he has recently come back to the subject in an introductory note to the debate on the ratification of the Pact in 1949<sup>7</sup>. Medeiros Ferreira's text is based upon an analysis of the foreign policy and tries to evaluate the roles of both Salazar and the Portuguese diplomacy in the process that leading up to the signing of the pact. Bearing the global context, constantly in mind, he focuses on the Portugal-Spain relationship, that is, the effects of Portugal's joining NATO on the Iberian Pact. He also considers the strategic consequences of the isolation of Spain. According to him, the role played by Salazar and Portuguese diplomacy in the formation of the alliance was nil. The same can not be said for the role they played in the diplomatic relations between Spain and Portugal: here Salazar obtained a diplomatic victory against the trend. He had aimed at the inclusion of Spain in the Atlantic Pact but it was her exclusion that, in fact, benefited Portuguese foreign policy, with important consequences in the Iberian context. From then onwards Portugal would be the privileged link between Spain and the West, a situation that benefited Portugal by increasing her power of negotiation.

In spite of these analyses and a short summarising article<sup>8</sup> which is developed in this text, the main issue about the Portuguese participation in the foundation and in the first steps of the Alliance, is still derived from

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<sup>6</sup> José Medeiros Ferreira, *As Ditaduras Ibéricas e a Fundação da Aliança Atlântica*, in *O Estado Novo – das origens ao fim da autarquia*, Lisboa, 1987, vol. I, pp. 395/401 and *Um século de Problemas – as relações luso-espanholas da União Ibérica à Comunidade Europeia*, Lisboa, 1989, p. 57/66.

<sup>7</sup> José Medeiros Ferreira, "A ratificação portuguesa do Tratado do Atlântico", in *Política Internacional*, nº 1, 1990, p.p.155/157.

<sup>8</sup> Nuno Severiano Teixeira – "Portugal na O.T.A.N." in *Dicionário Ilustrado da História de Portugal*, II vol. Lisboa, 1986.



its contemporary echoes. Carried by the official institutions<sup>9</sup> and by the Régime's press,<sup>10</sup> this concept is still supported by Franco Nogueira today.

Franco Nogueira develops his views on the subject in some of his works. First in his biography of Salazar<sup>11</sup> and then in the second supplement to the "História de Portugal" by Damião Peres<sup>12</sup>. His work is important on account of the documental sources used, as the author consulted material from Salazar's archives which are not accessible to the other researchers. Not only is Nogueira's work based on the assumptions previously discussed – neglecting the influence of internal and external factors and giving emphasis to Salazar's role in the process, but it is also largely based on the implicit scope of legitimating the political and diplomatic behaviour of the Presidente do Conselho. In short, one could say that, on the subject of the constitution of the Alliance and Portugal's participation, Franco Nogueira supports two main issues: first, he stresses Portugal's role as a founder member; second, he even attributes the paternity of the idea of an Atlantic Pact to Salazar himself<sup>13</sup>.

The following presentation of new information on the problem, will enable a further review of these theses, according to the theoretical standpoints developed previously.

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<sup>9</sup> Cf. *Diário das Sessões da Assembleia Nacional* and the Report of the Câmara Corporativa, particularly *Diário das Sessões da Assembleia Nacional*, nº 200 e 201, on the 26 and 28 of July, 1949.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. particularly *Diário da Manhã*.

<sup>11</sup> Franco Nogueira, *Salazar*, vol. IV, Coimbra, 1980.

<sup>12</sup> In Damião Peres, *História de Portugal*, II Suplemento, Lisboa, 1986.

<sup>13</sup> Franco Nogueira, *Salazar*, vol. cit. p. 142.

### 3. The international scene and the origins of the Atlantic Pact:

The fact that the Atlantic Pact has a civilizational identity with old and deep roots is not doubted and Claude Delmas has demonstrated it very clearly<sup>14</sup>.

That "Atlantism", in the sense we give it, from 1945 to the present day, begins to form in the first post-war period, is the conclusion that can be drawn from Denise Artaud's work on the historical origins of "Atlantism"<sup>15</sup>.

Nevertheless, the direct origins of the Atlantic Pact must be sought during Second World War, and more essentially in the evolution of the international scene in the following post-war period.

Already during the War, the first ideas for the reorganisation of the international scene according to new principles appear, and the bases of what would later become a new collective security system are laid. The first demonstration of this new spirit was the so-called "Atlantic Charter" signed on the 26th August 1941 on board the "Prince of Wales", by Churchill and Roosevelt. Following the "Atlantic Charter" and its spirit, and with the Soviet Union already at war, the "United Nations Declaration" is signed in Washington on the 1st January 1942. During 1943 diplomatic efforts were made in order to further these measures. First, in October, at the Moscow Conference, and then in November, at the Tehran Conference attended by Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin, during which the Soviet Union affirmed her formal adhesion to the Declaration. Finally, on the 26th June 1945, during the San Francisco Conference, the "United Nations Charter" is formally approved, thus marking the first appearance of O.N.U.

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<sup>14</sup> Claude Delmas, *Les Enracinements Historiques de l' Atlantisme*, Paris, 1979.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Denise Artaud, "Aux Origines de l' Atlantisme : à la Recherche d' un équilibre européen au lendemain de la première guerre mondiale", in *Relations Internationales*, 1977, n° 10, p.p.115/ 126.

A new world was being born from the ruins of war. Yalta and Potsdam would forge the bases of a new international system – heterogeneous and bipolar, to use Raymond Aron's classification<sup>16</sup>.

At Yalta, the agreement between the "Great Powers" was made with denazification in mind. Yet, between Yalta and Potsdam, the concept of "democratization" opened the controversy between Anglo-Saxons and Soviets. From the start the "Declaration of Free Europe", that planned free elections and the establishment of democratic regimes in the countries in question, caused a political and ideological rift between the two opposing concepts of Democracy: parliamentary democracy, in the West; popular democracy, in the East. In May 1945, Churchill already spoke of the "Iron Curtain"<sup>17</sup>.

In spite of the efforts of the diplomatic marathon that ended with the New York Conference, international tension gets progressively worse during all of 1946: first, the Azerbaijan problem; afterwards the outbreak of Civil War in Greece; and finally the first blocks in the mechanism of the foursided institutions in Germany. The confrontation between the Soviets and the Western Allies was now open and declared.

On top of the political and ideological rift-parliamentary democracy/popular democracy – a second rift of an economic nature appeared: that of capitalism/socialism. A third division, of a military and political nature was, than, to appear – the formation of the Alliances N.A.T.O./ Warsaw Pact.

Nevertheless, to understand the birth of the political and military alliances one needs to focus closely on a problem that became one of the main concerns after the Second World War – the problem of European security.

The great threat to European security, which had been constituted by Nazi Germany since the Thirties, was at the forefront of the minds of the political leaders and international public opinion immediately after the War. And it was as a result of the German threat that the first attempt at European security was made – the Treaty of Dunkirk, signed between France and Great Britain, on the 4th March 1947.

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<sup>16</sup> Raymond Aron, *Paix et Guerre entre les Nations*, Paris, 1963, p.p. 108/113 and 144/148.

<sup>17</sup> Telegram from Churchill to Truman, on the 12 May 1945, quoted in, Claude Delmas, *L' O.T.A.N.*, Paris 1981, p.16.



Very soon, however, the development of the Cold War would change the features of the international situation.

When the Cold War was at its peak in 1948, the problem of founding a defense organization by the Western European countries could not leave the United States indifferent.

The Vandenberg resolution, approved by the Senate on the 11th June 1948, would bring an end to the traditional isolation of the United States. From then onwards, the United States, following constitutional procedures, would support "regional or collective measures, based upon a individual or mutual, effective and continuous help"<sup>18</sup>. The possibility of a mutual defense system including to the whole area of the North Atlantic was created.

In this bipolar world and included in the Western bloc, the situation changed for Western Europe – the threat was no longer German but Soviet, and the security framework was not European, but Atlantic.

In this context, and following previous contacts, the United States and Canada opened negotiations with the governments which had signed the Brussels Pact, in order to sign the Atlantic North Pact. Started on the 6th July 1948 in Washington, the negotiations were successfully completed in September of the same year<sup>19</sup>. After a short period of diplomatic consultations, on the 15th March 1949 these countries formally invited six other countries belonging to the area of application of the Treaty to join them in signing the Pact, scheduled for April 1949. Portugal was included in those powers.

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<sup>18</sup> Vandenberg Resolution – Resolution 239 of North-American Senate, 80<sup>e</sup> Congress, 2<sup>a</sup> Session, on the 11 July 1948, in O.T.A.N.– Documents Fondamentaux, Bruxelles, 1976, p. 11. Cf. Senator Vandenberg's report on the resolution in, Vandebreg, **The Private Papers of Senator Vandenberg**, Wesport/Connecticut, 1952, p.p.392/420.

<sup>19</sup> The international situation which led to the signing of the Pact, particularly the different phases of the negotiations leading to its conclusion, have been minutely studied by historiographers after 78. Cf. particularly: Pierre Mélandri, **L'Alliance Atlantique**, Paris, 1979, p.p. 9/62; Thimoty P. Ireland, **Creating the Entangling Alliance –The Origins of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization**, Wesport /London, 1981, p.p.9/151; Sir Nicholas Henderson, **The Birth of Nato**, London, 1982; Don Cook, **Forging the Alliance, Nato 1945 to 1950**, London, 1989, p.p. 24/ 221.

## 4. Portugal and the foundation of the Atlantic

### Pact:

The first question to be dealt with is relatively simple – why was Portugal invited to take part in the Pact? The main reason is fundamentally of a geo-strategic nature and can be found in the framework of the new security system developed by the Brussels Pact countries, U.S.A. and Canada. Conceived against the Soviet threat, this security system for the North Atlantic was based, as it still is today, on two basic pillars. The first, the American continent, acting as the rearguard, a sort of a second line based on the extraordinary strategic potential of the United States, which was essential as the U.S.A. provided indispensable back-up and guaranteed the whole system. The second was Western Europe, whose countries would form the front line and provide immediate defense. Nevertheless, the area of the application of the treaty was not yet complete. Firstly their flanks had to be protected. This explains the invitation to join, which was extended to Norway and Denmark in Northern Europe, and to Italy in Southern Europe<sup>20</sup>. General Franco's Spain, under international blockade after the end of the Second World War, would not be invited. Secondly, and to guarantee the functioning of the system, it was indispensable to promote the linkage between the front and the rear, that is, between the two pillars of the Pact. Thus Iceland was invited in the extreme North and Portugal was invited in the extreme south of the North Atlantic, the

Azores playing a decisive role on account of their strategic value<sup>21</sup>.

In fact, the Azores, a vital strategic point in the Atlantic, were the main reason for this invitation. An important military base in the First World War, their the

importance had been fundamental in the Second World War and they were indispensable in the post-war period<sup>22</sup>. Their geo-strategic value led

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<sup>20</sup> Cf note nº 1

<sup>21</sup> On the Strategic value of Portuguese territories, particularly the Atlantic Islands, Cf. Virgílio de Carvalho: *Cumprir Agora Portugal*, Lisboa, 1987, p. 79/91 and "A Importância Estratégica das Regiões Autónomas" in *Nação e Defesa* nº 13, jan/mar 1980, p.111.

<sup>22</sup> On the historic importance of the Azores Bases Cf. José Medeiros Ferreira, "Os Açores nas duas guerras mundiais", in *Política Internacional*, nº 1, Jan. 1990, p.p.5/17; and Gianluca André, *Il Problema delle Azzore e la Neutralità del Portogallo durante la Seconda Guerra Mondiale*, Milano, 1971.



the Pentagon to include it in their defense plans, and to show interest in including them in their system of bases of the post-war period. After tough negotiations, on the 2nd February 1948, Portugal and the United States sign an agreement on the Azores<sup>23</sup>. Now part of the Atlantic Pact, the importance of the Azores was confirmed and reinforced: in case of an attack coming from the east, the main concept of defense developed by the Alliance was the "rapid reinforcement of Europe". This reinforcement passed inevitably through the Azores: the Azorean bases were in a fundamental strategic position to cater to Europe's economic and military needs. Furthermore, the military bases could serve as a control station of sea and air routes ways in the North Atlantic.

The second question concerns the role played by Portugal and Portuguese diplomacy in the foundation of the Pact, and the consequences of the adhesion to Portuguese domestic and foreign policy. And this is much more difficult. We will try to answer it by analysing and understanding it in the long, complex process from the invitation to the ratification of the Treaty. At the end of the preliminary negotiations between the European and American partners and after they had agreed on the general basis of the treaty, Portugal was informed of the course of the negotiations. On the 6th October 1948, the British Embassy delivered in Lisbon a "Promemória", informing the Portuguese government of the recent negotiations and stated the need to form a security system which should be in agreement with the United Nations Charter, in particular with its Clauses number 51 and 52<sup>24</sup>.

A few months later, on the 31st December and following exhaustive enquiries from the London and Washington Embassies, Portugal gave her answer.

In its document, the Portuguese government considered that the international scene required, in fact, "the existence of a diplomatic instrument, of a defensive character, allowing the coordinating of the efforts of the different North Atlantic countries in case of aggression", but it also made three points it thought important. In the first place, any attempt at exceeding national autonomy or integration was rejected and "projects of economic or politic fusion, of union or federation" were considered unacceptable. Secondly, "Portugal expressed the fear that the

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<sup>23</sup> On the Azores Bases Agreements Cf. R. E. Vintras *História Secreta da Base dos Açores*, Lisboa, 1975; and more recently Antonio Marquina Barrio, *La España en la Política de Seguridad Occidental*, Madrid, 1986, particularly the first Appendix, p.p. 943/960.

<sup>24</sup> *British Pro-memoria on the 6 october 1948* – A.M.N.E., Negócios Políticos, Arm. 50, Maço 37.



main aim of the treaty was to establish in peacetime military bases of strategic value for the defense of the Atlantic". Obviously this remark was meant to clear up the Azorean situation. Lastly, attention was drawn to the Spanish situation. The geographical and strategic unity of the Iberian Peninsula was reaffirmed, and Spain was held as an important country for Western defense, together with Portugal<sup>25</sup>. This position corresponded to the official standing supported by the war minister Santos Costa.

From then onwards, insistent reports from the London and Washington Embassies arrived in Lisbon, reaffirming the interest felt by the countries already involved for Portugal's inclusion in the treaty <sup>26</sup>.

By that time, negotiations between the European and American allies were concluded and a provisional version of the treaty was ready, and there was a decision was made to invite six other countries. The U.S.A. and the United Kingdom were nominated official negotiators with Portugal, and opened the first informal contacts in order to prepare further negotiations and a possible invitation to join the Pact<sup>27</sup>.

The long and complex process of negotiations developed all through 1949, in two main phases. The first consisted of the inicial and informal contacts up to the signing of the treaty, on the 4th April; the second, lasted from the signing of the treaty to its ratification on the 25th July.

The first period began on the 10th January, when Lisbon received the answers from the United States and the United Kingdom to the Portuguese government . The positions of the negotiating powers were basically in agreement on political and diplomatic issues. Both negotiators confirmed and reassented their interest in Portugal's participation and tried to clarify some of the points requested by the Lisbon government.

With regard to the United Nations Charter, the document explained that, although it was mentioned in the treaty, its text would allow the signing of the treaty by the countries who did not belong to the United Nations.

As to the three basic points previously made by Lisbon, it was stated in the document that, in relation to the first, the treaty did not allow for the

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<sup>25</sup> **Portuguse Pro-memoria, on the 31 December 1948, A.M.N.E.,** Negócios Políticos, Arm. 50, Maço37.

<sup>26</sup> **Telegrams nº 11 from the Embassy of London onthe 7 January, 1949; and nº 10 from the Embassy of Washington on the 11 January 1949 – A.M.N.E.,** Negócios Políticos, Arm.50, Maço 37.

<sup>27</sup> **British Aid-Memoire on the 10 January, 1949 – A.M.N.E.,** Negócios Políticos, Arm. 50, Maço 37.

establishment of military bases for the defense of the North Atlantic in peacetime. Furthermore, the North American document said that use of the military bases in each territory would only be made within the framework of the consultation mechanism allowed by the Pact. Thus, the concession of any military facilities could never be made without the consent of the sovereign country – the guarantees on the Azorean territory seemed to have been given.

Regarding the second point, they said that the Pact did not aim at any attempt at integration or supranationality, that “the members of the treaty would not not give up total autonomy of the parts”. The American document even guarantees that, although the United States was glad to be able to count on the integration of the Western European nations, the Pact was a completely different plan that should not be confused with those measures. So, there was no incompatibility between the Pact and the positions expressed by the Portuguese government.

Finally, in relation to Spain, both the countries recognized the Portuguese argument on the strategic unity of the Iberian Peninsula as a whole and the value of Spanish territory. Nevertheless both restated the impossibility of Spain’s joining in the present situation on account of its internal situation. However, the American document suggested that, if Portugal joined, future negotiations for the integration of Spain would be easier<sup>28</sup>.

When delivering diplomatic documents, the American ambassador in Lisbon, MacVeagh, expressed to the Portuguese Minister of Foreign Affairs, Caeiro da Matta, the wish to be informed on, how and when, the formal invitation to join the Pact could be presented<sup>29</sup>.

Between the last days of February and the first days of March, news on the conclusion of the final version of the treaty, accompanied by the first pressure on Lisbon to make clear her position on the matter, arrived in Lisbon from several Portuguese Embassies in different countries. The North American Department of State foresaw the publication of the treaty for a near date (scheduled for the 15th, it took place on the 18th). At the moment of the publication of the treaty, the United States wanted to

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<sup>28</sup> North American Aid-Memoire on the 10 January 1949, A.M.N.E., Negócios Políticos, Arm. 50, Maço 37.

<sup>29</sup> Portuguese Memorial on the 8 March 1949 – A. M.N.E., Negócios Políticos, Arm. 50, Maço 37.



announce its adherents<sup>30</sup>. Theotónio Pereira insisted from Washington that Portugal should make a decision.

In spite of this insistence, the Portuguese Government did not express its decision. The delay was related not only to the mentioned previously remarks, but also with the first Spanish pressure on Lisbon, invoking the Iberian Pact and its Additional Protocol.

In the first days of March, in order to ensure its position and, maybe, to gain some time and enhance its negotiating position, the Portuguese government sent the negotiating countries a memorandum. Caeiro da Matta expressed once more the Portuguese points and clearly defined the wishes and the guarantees required by Portugal.

There were basically three issues to be cleared, without which a definitive final decision could not be taken:

- first, the duration of the treaty. Twenty years, the period propagated by the international press, seemed too long to the Portuguese Government. After having obtained Portuguese neutrality in the Second War, Salazar did not want to get involved in any other conflict, that might break out in such a long period;

- second, and once more, the Spanish question. Not only was the theory of Santos Costa on the strategic unity of the Iberian Peninsula and consequently the importance of Spain in any defense plan of the West and the Atlantic restated, but a strong argument was put forward as to the internal situation invoked by the negotiating countries. He stated that if the “ present position of the Spanish government is, fortunately, not a military or strategic problem to the countries present at the Washington negotiations, the Portuguese government feels obliged to draw the attention of the other nations to the probability of an evolution of Spanish politics towards an extremist government with predictable political and strategic consequences”.

- in third place, there was an attempt to clear up the situation of the Portuguese colonies regarding the Atlantic Pact, trying to include them in the treaty's security area.

- finally, and once more, the Charter of the United Nations was quoted. Its mention in the treaty was considered unkind to Portugal, which was not a member of the organization<sup>31</sup>.

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<sup>30</sup> Telegram n° 73 from the Embassy of Washington, on the 8 March 1949, A.M.N.E. Arquivo da Em baixada de Washington, Pasta 150 proc. 70.

<sup>31</sup> Portuguese Memorial on the 8 March 1949, loc.cit.



From this moment onwards, a tough and complex process of decision-making took place. The Portuguese government, besides its involvement in its internal contradictions, was the target of crossfire coming from outside. On one hand, the negotiating countries, Britain and the United States, who urged Portugal to join the Pact, and on the other Spain, who tried to persuade Portugal not to do so.

On the 17th March the formal invitation to join the Pact was received in Portugal together with the final text of the treaty. These were accompanied by two diplomatic documents, giving the explanations required and justifying the motives of the negotiating countries. In both of them there was a total rejection of the Portuguese proposals, although this was justified in a diplomatic manner.

In the first place, the suggestion to reduce the period of duration of the treaty is rejected, given that Clauses 12 and 13 of the Pact did not lead to the "apprehensions on that respect expressed by the Portuguese Government".

Secondly, they definitely rejection the inclusion of Spain for the reasons expressed in previous documents.

Thirdly, and according to the clause 5 of the Pact, they said that the Portuguese colonies could not be included in the area protected by the treaty. They added that other countries such as France and England were in the same situation<sup>32</sup>.

On the other hand, Spain began to put on pressure in the opposite direction. In fact, as soon as the formal invitation to Portugal to join the Pact was made public, Nicolas Frnaco, Spanish ambassador in Lisbon asked Caeiro da Matta for an immediate audience<sup>33</sup>.

In a long memorandum, Franco, invoking the Iberian Pact, manifested his total disagreement regarding the possibility of Portugal signing the Treaty. This disapproval was based on two points:

– first, Portugal had reached an advanced stage in the negotiations with the western countries after assuming a unilateral position, without consulting Spain in the scope of the Iberian Pact.

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<sup>32</sup> **British Pro-memoria on the 17 March** – A.M.N.E., Negócios Políticos, Arm. 50, Maço 37.

<sup>33</sup> **Letter of Nicolas Franco, from the Spanish Embassy in Lisbon, on the 20 March 1949**, A.M.N.E. Negócios Políticos, Arm. 50, Maço 37.

– Second, he stated that article 8 of the Atlantic treaty was not compatible with any previous diplomatic commitment and thus with the Iberian Pact. In conclusion Spain meant that Portugal “should have previously studied the invitation and made a decision either with the previous agreement with Spain, or if they had not both examined the new situation created by the treaty, agreed on common action by both of each one”<sup>34</sup>.

This position, which Spain presented formally to the Portuguese government<sup>35</sup>, was not meant to obtain Portugal’s exclusion from the treaty, but rather to achieve Spain’s inclusion together with Portugal.

The situation was getting more complex every day and a definitive answer was becoming more and more urgent.

Theotonio Pereira sent reliable information from Washington: the Portuguese wishes could not be accepted. The first and the second, because they would alter the text of the treaty. As it had already been published that would be completely impossible. The third demand was rejected because, after consultation with the countries involved in the treaty, all of them, without exception, were in favour of keeping the duration of the treaty at twenty years<sup>36</sup>.

A decision had to be made urgently and Salazar called a meeting of the ministers. In the days before the meeting took place, the Prime Minister received a letter from the Secretary of State Dean Acheson and a personal appeal from the Prime Minister Bevin, through their embassies

They both insisted that Salazar should sign the Pact in equal circumstances with the other signatories, but they both definitively refused the Portugal’s requests. They suggested, in a veiled form, that, if Portugal refused the invitation, such a refusal could be exploited by the Soviet Union: international public opinion would feel that Lisbon held a serious responsibility if this happened.

Bevin asked Palmela, the Portuguese ambassador in London, “to insist personally with Salazar to sign the Pact”. Considering the two first Portuguese wishes solved, he stated that the only person responsible for

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<sup>34</sup> Spanish Memorandum on the 21 March 1949, A.M.N.E., Negócios Políticos, Arm. 50, Maço 37.

<sup>35</sup> Letter of Nicolas Franco from Spanish Embassy in Lisbon, on the 24 March 1949, A.M.N.E., Negócios Políticos, Arm. 50, Maço 37.

<sup>36</sup> Telegram nº 97 from the Embassy of Washington, on the 20 March 1949, A.M.N.E. Arquivo da Embaixada em Washington, Pasta 150, proc. 70.



the duration of twenty years was himself. Answering Salazar's reservations about a possible involvement in a European conflict, he explained that "the only danger that can exist in the next twenty years is the Russian one"<sup>37</sup>.

Dean Acheson confirmed in his letter the impossibility of reducing the duration of the Pact. Such a radical change in American external policy, like the Vanderberg Resolution, would not be justified by a shorter duration. Furthermore, such a period "could prove inadequate to ensure the necessary stability [...] and security to Europe..."<sup>38</sup>. He added, a Portuguese refusal could stimulate other countries' refusals which the Soviet Union might exploit, thus endangering Western security.

Although the requests for the strategical military bases were granted, none of the other Portuguese demands were accepted. In fact, none of them seriously affected the great powers.

The external pressures on Lisbon grew greater and greater. Her old ally and the new maritime power insisted, on one hand, that Portugal should join the Pact. Spain, on the other, tried to get Portugal to refuse membership in order to negotiate her own inclusion together. As this possibility was out of question, not to sign could seem a clear concession to Madrid's pressure. On the other hand, adhesion meant to Portugal the pursuit of the traditional Atlantic vocation of its foreign policy.

Finally, the progressive bipolarization of the international situation and the worsening of the Cold War brought any further hesitation to an end. If Portugal refused, it would be an obvious sign of the fragmentation of the West, susceptible to exploitation by the Soviet Union. This was too expensive a risk for Portugal to take, and it was the last thing Salazar really wanted.

The decision could no longer wait, and, after three agitated meetings of the Government, a decision was made: Portugal would sign the Pact.

On the 30th March Portugal sent her formal acceptance of the invitation to the negotiating countries, and announced that she would be represented by her Foreign Affairs Minister at the ceremony of the signing of the treaty<sup>39</sup>.

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<sup>37</sup> Telegrams n° 78/ 79/ 80 from the Embassy of London, on the 19 March 1949, A.M.N.E., Negócios Políticos, Arm. 50, maço 37.

<sup>38</sup> Letter from Dean Acheson, on the 22 March 1949, A.M.N.E., Negócios Políticos, Arm. 50, Maço 37.

<sup>39</sup> Letter from the Portuguese Government to the British and North-American Embassies on the 30 March 1949, A.M.N.E., Negócios Políticos, Arm. 50, Maço 34.



Caeiro da Matta was in Washington on the 4th April and, together with the other founding members and under Truman's chairmanship, signed the North Atlantic Treaty.

This position of the Portuguese government gave origin to different and contradictory reactions. Its consequences were various and meaningful, in both the external and internal contexts. A second phase of the process had begun by then, leading to the ratification of the treaty.

As regards the external context, the Alliance imposed a redefinition of the traditional Atlantic vector of the Portuguese foreign policy, now in a multilateral context and under the influence of a new maritime power: the United States of America. On the continent, the normalization of the relations with Spain was a necessity, as these had been affected by the Portuguese adhesion to the Pact. First, in order to calm Spanish susceptibilities, Salazar gave an interview to the United Press, and this was quoted widely in the newspapers there. Afterwards, the Portuguese government sent a formal justification of its position to Madrid. Portugal had always supported the strategic unity of the Iberian Peninsula and the importance of the Spanish territory to western security, and had fought until the end for the inclusion of Spain in the treaty. Such a request had not been accepted by the negotiating countries. Because of this and in such a situation, the adhesion of Portugal would be advantageous not only to Portugal but also to Spain, as she could count on a friendly voice inside the organization, that might be able to negotiate the inclusion of Spain later on. In the same document the Portuguese government rejected the Spanish statement that Portugal's adhesion would mean growing risks and threats to Spain. Finally, he declared that there was no formal incompatibility between the Atlantic and the Iberian Pacts<sup>40</sup>.

The Spanish answer was moderate and conciliatory. Nevertheless, it considered the need to define, if not revise, the concept of "assistance" included in the Iberian Pact and its Additional Protocol, in order to construct a new state of relations between the two Iberian States. All this, wanting the "continuation of cooperation regarding the foreign policy of our two countries towards a cordial and firm friendship, that has ruled our relationships"<sup>41</sup>.

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<sup>40</sup> Portuguese Memorandum to the Spanish Government, on the 28 March 1949, A.M.N.E., Negócios Políticos, Arm. 50, Maço 37.

<sup>41</sup> Letter from the Spanish ambassador, Nicolas Franco, to the Portuguese Government on the 8 April 1949, A. M.N.E., Negócios Políticos, Arm. 50, Maço 34.

The process of normalization of Portuguese-Spanish relations was under way. The signing of a Preliminary Agreement of Economic Cooperation<sup>42</sup>, in July 1949, would confirm it. The visit paid to Salazar in October by Franco crowned this normalization<sup>43</sup>.

At an internal level, Portugal's integration in the Alliance divided the military and political opponents and the supporters of the regime completely, starting with government itself.

Even before the decision to join the Pact, the disagreement between members of the government was clear. Costa Leite, invoking economic arguments, was in favour of joining; Cavaleiro Ferreira, cautious, maintained that Portugal should wait, and not make any immediate decision right away. Caeiro da Matta and Américo Thomaz, were in favor of signing without hesitation. José Frederico Ulrich was against it. Lastly, Cancela de Abreu and Santos Costa, absent from the first two meetings of the Council, would give their agreement <sup>44</sup>.

Opinion was divided not only in the government, but also in the opposition. Triggered off by the presidential campaign of Norton de Matos, the increasingly apparent rift between its different factions became final with Portugal's integration into the Pact. One side was the democratic opposition of the republican tradition, on the other the Communist party – these positions already clearly defined by the Cold War <sup>45</sup>.

The democratic opposition was clearly in favour of the Atlantic Pact. The Alliance, comprising the main Western democracies and referring to the principles of the United Nations Charter, was viewed as an implicit condemnation of the authoritarian regime. Simultaneously it might be used as a possible form of pressure, even if weak, towards making the country democratic. The newspaper "República", which expressed this sector's opinion, gave full attention to the problems related to the

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<sup>42</sup> **Luso-Spanish Preliminary Agreement of Economic Cooperation**, unpublished, A.M.N.E., Caixa dos Tratados Potugal-Espanha.

<sup>43</sup> On the Spanish/Portuguese relations Cf., particularly from the Spanish point of view, Aldo Albónico, "Negozianti tra 'Impotenze': Spagna e Portogallo tra Patto Iberico e Alleanza Atlantica", in *Nuova Rivista Storica*, Anno LXXIV, Maggio-Agosto 1990, Fascicolo III-IV, pp. 333/348.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. Franco Nogueira, op. cit. p.p.143/144.

<sup>45</sup> On Crisis of the Opposition to Salazar's regime, Cf. D. L. Raby, **Fascism and Resistance in Portugal**, Manchester/New York, 1988, particularly, p.p. 29/38 and p.p.107/113.



building of the Alliance, from the beginning, considering it “a victory of the democracies”, as did Truman <sup>46</sup>. In an editorial commenting on the signing and the meaning of the Pact, invoking the United Nations Charter, it was stated: “Absolutely against all authoritarian governments, [...], all dictatorships, Whatever colour they are, we live today as yesterday with certainty and faith that with democratic institutions and thus enjoying all democratic liberties, all peoples, all men can achieve the peaceful and secure life they strive for. It is stated in the Atlantic Pact, and we understand it ourselves!”<sup>47</sup>.

On the other hand, the communists, agreeing with the Soviet positions, were radically against the Pact. The “Avante”, central organ of the Communist Party, although clandestine, expressed the opinion of this sector: “The Atlantic Pact was an instrument of aggression” of North American Imperialism. Its “purpose was clearly aggressive and was meant to prepare war against the U.S.S.R. and Popular Democracies, guardians of peace<sup>48</sup>. And Salazar, after “ruinous concessions of national wealth to Anglo-Saxon monopolies [...] after endangering national sovereignty by giving away aero-naval bases [...]” his policy of national betrayal culminated with the adhesion of Portugal to the Alliance. The Pact endangered Peace and National Independence”<sup>49</sup>.

The signing of the Treaty did not obtain complete consensus among the military also. Their opposition was not of a political nature but was essentially technical and military. Two different, if not opposite ways of interpreting the strategic military defense of Portugal and its integration into the post-war West’s security system were being debated: the model of General Santos Costa and the model of General Raul Esteves.

Santos Costa’s model, then Minister of War, was taken up and supported by the Portuguese government as its official position and this was the theory that prevailed in the diplomatic negotiations that led to the adhesion process. This theory was based on the concept of “Iberian Bloc”, that is, the defense, the geographical and geo-strategic unity of the Iberian Peninsula. Thus, the formation of a military defense system that was common to both Portugal and Spain was suggested. This idea, which had its historical origins in the support given by Salazar to Franco during the Civil War, also legitimated the Iberian Pact. Now the point was to update it in the context of the Cold War, allowing for the possibility of the

<sup>46</sup> Cf. *A República* 19 March 1949, p.4.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. *A República*, 25 March 1949, p.1.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. *Avante*, second fortnight of March 1949, p.2.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. *Avante*, April 1949, p.p. 1/2. See also the number of May.



arrival of the Soviet armies at the Pyrenees. "No geographical feature can serve as an obstacle to the normal development of military operations in the east-west sense through the whole Peninsula. In the light of this concept – says Santos Costa – the true power of the "Iberian Bloc" lies rather in the geographical reality – which is undeniable- in its configuration and its obstacles in the interior, which channel rather than winder the movements of someone who, [...] having left the far interiors of the continent, wishes to profit from the heat of the sun or enjoy the sweet quietness of the always mystical and beautiful "western Portuguese coast"<sup>50</sup>.

It is precisely this concept of "Iberian Bloc" that is contested by Raul Esteve's theory. Against this continental concept of a rear defense against any threat from the East, and against a Portuguese-Spanish "system" of military defense, he defended an Atlantic perspective, in which Portugal would be a forward defense of the United States and a total differentiation of the strategic functions of the Iberian territory. The line of the Pyrenees, he said, is no less vulnerable then any other defense line in Central Europe. And given the importance of the strategical potential of the United States to rescue Europe, military operations would have to be organized to the extreme west of the Atlantic coasts. "For these operational bases ... – says Raul Esteves – it is the Portuguese territory which geographically and historically is the most appropriate to be the main point to be considered. So, we should stress this point: the best base of operations for any fight in Europe, in the direction West – East and coming from the Atlantic is undoubtedly Portugal and her Atlantic islands". He underlined: "Portugal is for these cases the true base of operations and not the Iberian Peninsula"<sup>51</sup>.

In spite of these differing opinions on matters of strategy, the military supported, in general terms, Portugal's integration in the Alliance. They expected that such membership would lead the way to the modernization and renewal of the Armed Forces<sup>52</sup>.

Some more radical sectors, however, did not consider the Pact to be a safe security system for Portugal . They reactly firmly against the myth

<sup>50</sup> Santos Costa, on the preface to Alberto Andrade e Silva, *Teatro de Operações de Portugal*, Lisboa, 1950, p. 9.

<sup>51</sup> Raul Esteves, "O Pacto do Atlântico e a Defesa de Portugal", in *O Comércio do Porto* on 29 July 1949, republished in *Revista Militar*, nº 8/9, Aug/Sept. 1949. Raul Esteves developed his thesis, later, in the book *A Defesa Da Europa Ocidental*, Lisboa, 1952.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. the Report of the Defense Comission of the Assembleia Nacional in *Diário das Sessões da Assembleia Nacional*, nº 201, on the 28 July 1949, p.p.749.

which, they said, had been created so that “the Americans will do it all”. Under the influence of a war psychosis, they thought war was possible and in this case neutrality was impossible. They called for a “national effort” for intensive military preparation<sup>53</sup>.

In opposition to these nationalist positions, Portugal’s inclusion in the Alliance’s military system brought many consequences and marked the beginning of a period of intense modernization for the Portuguese armed forces. This modernization included not only the renewal of technical equipment which the “Mutual Aid Plan” put into effect in the fifties, but also professional and specialized training of military staff<sup>54</sup>. This period of modernization and professional training of the armed forces caused and was therefore accompanied by a certain eclipse of military intervention in political life. As this had been a constant throughout Portuguese contemporary history, not only the Democratic Republic but also the New State, it is important to note that the last military coup of any consequence, before Nato, was the “Mealhada revolt” in 1946 and after that, only the “Abrilada” in 1961 with the beginning of the colonial problem<sup>55</sup>.

In spite of all these hesitations and disagreements, the climate of public opinion was calm, as it should be in a regime where there was no place for political freedom.

On the 27th April the process of ratification of the Treaty began. As required by the Constitution, the text of the Treaty was sent to the “Assembleia Nacional” and next to the “Câmara Corporativa”,<sup>56</sup> which was supposed to analyse it. After long and agitated sessions, the “Câmara Corporativa” drew up its conclusions on the ratification of the Treaty. In the first place, and according to the official position, great importance was given to the “remarkable foresight of the Treaty” by Salazar, “at a time when nobody had yet conceived it”. In the second, it emphasized once more, some of the reservations expressed by the government. Finally, and on account of the threat to Western and Christian

<sup>53</sup> Cf. “N”, “Reflexões sobre o Pacto Atlântico”, in *Defesa Nacional*, nº 185, Set. 1949, pp.70/71; and Nuno Vaz Pinto, “Reflexões sobre o Pacto do AtlânticoII”, in *Defesa Nacional* nº 188, dez. 1949, p.p. 138/139.

<sup>54</sup> Cf. Maria Carrilho, *Forças Armadas e Mudança política em Portugal no Séc. XX*, Lisboa, 1985. On the technical aspect and the armament see particularly, p.p.332/335 and on the professional specialization of the staff, p.p.377/399.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. João B. Serra/Luis Salgado Matos, “Intervenções militares na vida política”, in *Análise Social*, nº 72/73/74, vol I, 1982, p.p. 1165/1195.

<sup>56</sup> The two Chambers of Parliament.



Civilization, it could not help but give its agreement. "Truthfully, the Atlantic Pact will pass on to History as the symbol and the expression of a new crusade: that of the defense of the Western and Christian civilisation. That would be enough for us not to ignore it. As a Western and Catholic country by vocation, Portugal must welcome and ratify it with enthusiasm<sup>57</sup>.

So, following the ratification of the Treaty by other states and after Theotónio Pereira ensured that it was ratified by the American Senate, Salazar wrote to the President of the Republic and asked him to call an extraordinary session of the "Assembleia Nacional". The seriousness of the occasion justified it.

On the 25th July Salazar was present in person at the Câmara and made a speech.

He first analysed the international situation after the Second World War. He regretted the crushing of Germany, the limitations of the Western powers, and, above all, the advance and the vast room for manoeuvre which Russia had gained in the North, East and South of Europe. "In these terms – says Salazar – one can say that if glory was the lot of some, victory belongs effectively to others"<sup>58</sup>.

Secondly, he expanded the theme of the Russian threat and stated the need to develop a security system that would protect Western and Christian Civilization from the communist threat. In the ultimate aims of the Treaty, he felt attached to "the obligations of the Pact"<sup>59</sup>

Thirdly, he developed the subject of the consequences of the Treaty on the future of Portugal's foreign relations. Relating to Britain, an old ally and traditional axis of Portugal's foreign policy, he stated that, due to the threat to the freedom and security of the Atlantic, and as England was one of the members, the Pact could not but reinforce the old Portuguese-British Alliance. As for Spain, he affirmed the total compatibility between the Atlantic Alliance and the Iberian Pact and reaffirmed his support to Spanish adhesion.

Finally, he reinforced once more the reservations already referred to, but concluded: "All of these are nevertheless lesser problems when faced

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<sup>57</sup> Cf the Report of the Câmara Corporativa, in *Diário das Sessões da Assembleia Nacional* nº 200, on the 26 July 1949, p.p. 732/735.

<sup>58</sup> Cf. Salazar, *Discursos e Notas Políticas*, vol IV – 1943/1950, Coimbra, s/d, p.405.

<sup>59</sup> id. op.cit. p.411.



with this fundamental fact: a good number of European countries with their lives of freedom, if threatened from now on can rely upon the help of the United States and each counts on the others to defend their civilizational heritage. It seemed difficult for us to be absent in such circumstances”<sup>60</sup>. The final word had been said.

The Parliament met on the 27th July, to discuss and vote on the Treaty. Once again the Prime Minister’s predictions of the treaty were praised. Once more, and during the debate, the reservations about the Treaty were emphasized: the reference to the United Nations Charter, the long duration of the Pact, the exclusion of Spain. Last, the destruction of Germany was again regretted, as her adhesion would only strengthen the Pact and the need to protect Western-Christian Civilization from the communist threat was once more referred to.

A short piece of the Member of Parliament José Nosilini’s declaration, sums up the climate that dominated the Chamber and the spirit in which the ratification of the Treaty had been voted on: “We are all aware that becoming a member of the Pact is not something we really wanted – it is a duty and a must”<sup>61</sup>.

The conclusions of the Parliamentary commissions of Defense and Foreign Affairs, reflecting the same spirit and according to the same arguments gave their support to the ratification of the Treaty<sup>62</sup>. The final result of the vote was 80 votes in favour and 3 votes against.

In the “*Diário do Governo*” of the 28th July, the resolution on the Treaty was published and its text ratified by the “*Assembleia Nacional*”. then Portugal became a full member of the Atlantic Alliance.

## 5. Conclusion:

In conclusion, what answers can we find to the different questions raised in the text:

What was the role played by Portugal as a founder member?

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<sup>60</sup> id. op. cit. p. 422.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. *Diário das Sessões da Assembleia Nacional*, nº 201, on the 28 July 1949, p. 743.

<sup>62</sup> Cf. id. p.p. 742 and 749.

What was the real role played by Salazar during the adhesion process?

What consequences would the adhesion to the Pact bring to domestic policy as well as to foreign policy in Portugal?

Portugal's role as founder member is not really relevant. As well as the other invited powers. When the invitation was extended to Portugal the negotiations between the countries which had promoted the Pact were already in their final stages and the text of the Treaty had almost reached its final version. The reservations put forward by the Portuguese government were not accepted because, as we can see, none of them affected the great powers. Contradicting his own biographer<sup>63</sup> who emphasizes Portugal's role, Salazar himself recognized in his speech to the "Assembleia Nacional": "the intervention of the Portuguese government in forging the Treaty – he says – was relatively modest"<sup>64</sup>

On Salazar's role two distinct problems have to be considered: the first, and less important, is the much publicized prediction of the Treaty; the second, and essential, is the analysis of his political and diplomatic positions which means the nature of his decision.

Regarding the prevision of the Treaty, in his time supported by the official institutions and recently by Franco Nogueira and even José Freire Antunes<sup>65</sup>, one point should be made clear. The correctness of Salazar's understanding of the international situation is not in question here. Both head of Government and of the Foreign Affairs Ministry, for many years and having endured particularly difficult periods such the Spanish Civil War and the Second World War, Salazar was perfectly aware of the evolution of the international scene. And since the end of the war he was conscious of the great changes in the correlation of forces and of the emergence of a new context of European security. He demonstrated this in his speeches of 1947 and 1948. In the face of the Russian threat, the possible context of Western security, would be a system that could join Europe to Africa, supported by the United States<sup>66</sup>. With reference to this one should in the first place point out the difference between an Euro-African alliance (with the colonial significance which this had) with

<sup>63</sup> Cf. Franco Nogueira, op. cit. p.p.142/146.

<sup>64</sup> Cf. Salazar, op.cit. p.421.

<sup>65</sup> José Freire Antunes, "Portugal e a Guerra Fria" in *O Semanário*, 23 December 1988, p.p.14/15.

<sup>66</sup> Cf. the Salazar's speeches "Miséria e Medo, características da hora actual", on the 25 November 1947, and "O Ocidente em face da Rússia", on the 28 April 1948, in op. cit. p.p.287/311 and 325/337.



America's support, suggested by Salazar, and a Euro-American alliance restricted to the North Atlantic that would be the proposal of the western nations. Next, one should note that the general idea of the new security context and the actual initiative of the Brussels Pact countries and its American counterpart are far from being the same thing.

To Salazar, what really counted was the defense of the values of Western and Christian Civilisation. The Cold War and the soviet presence in Europe gave support to his anti-communism. It was this spirit of crusade that encouraged and legitimated his final decision.

As far as Salazar's role in the process is concerned, it is important to note two points: firstly his own personal wishes; secondly the nature of his decision.

From a personal point of view, Salazar was far from enthusiastic about joining the Pact. In fact, he always had serious, repeated and insistent doubts. We can say that his decision was less an act of conviction than one of necessity.

As far as the nature of his decision is concerned, we must stress that it was subject to two strong conditions: firstly to the geo-strategic nature of Portugal's territory and secondly, essentially, to the international situation .

The invitation extended to Portugal was a direct result of the importance of the Portuguese strategic triangle for the military plans of the Alliance, especially the Azores, in the so-called "rapid reinforcement of Europe".

The internal divisions and, above all, the strong outside pressures reduced Salazar's room for manoeuvre, limited his alternatives and conditioned his decision profoundly .

Considering the two systems which exist, according to Duroselle, in the process of decision-making in foreign policy<sup>67</sup> – the system of causality (the weight of "deep forces") and the system of finality (the aims and freedom of the "statesman"). We have to conclude that in this case the decisive weight is that of the "deep forces" rather than of the "Statesman". The system of causality seems to prevail over that of finality.

If we take Duroselle's own classification<sup>68</sup> of decisions on foreign policy as a model we can classify Salazar's as follows: it was obviously political

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<sup>67</sup> Cf. Jean-Baptiste Duroselle, "La Liberté de l' Homme Politique", in Leo Hamon, *L' Élaboration de la Politique Étrangère*, Paris, 1969, p.p.153/160, particularly p.156

<sup>68</sup> Jean-Baptiste Duroselle, *Tout Empire Périra*, Paris, 1982, p.117.

in nature but it was also ideological considering its manifest anti-communism designs and the spirit of crusade in defense of a system of civilization; it was of a national dimension; immediate in its urgency; and, above all, inevitable in the necessity of its choice.

It would have been very difficult for any other decision to have been taken. It was more than Salazar's political wishes, it was a result of the geo-political and geo-strategic nature of the Portuguese territory and the unique situation created by the Cold War.

Portugal's joining the Alliance would still constitute a great victory for Salazar, "malgré lui", but still a victory.

At an internal level, Portugal's joining the Pact had great significance and three consequences. Firstly it meant international recognition of the Lisbon government. After the difficult post-war impact, the western democracies themselves were thus legitimating Salazar's regime<sup>69</sup>. Secondly, and the same time, it threw the opposition, both democratic and communist, into their greatest and longest crisis of the whole regime<sup>70</sup>. Finally the modernization and professional training of the armed forces kept the military away from political intervention for a long time.

At an external level, the signing of the Pact was no less significant. As far as the Iberian Peninsula was concerned, it meant that Portugal's position was strengthened in relation to Spain. In general, it meant the permanent and privileged alliance with maritime power in the Atlantic which was traditional in Portuguese foreign policy. It meant, however, a fundamental change in its pole of reference which was the Portuguese answer to the international scene of the second post-war period: the decline of the "old alliance" and the emergence of a new axis on the other side of the Atlantic – the United States of America.

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<sup>69</sup> It is interesting to note how the Secretary of State, Dean Acheson, in a press conference considered two important points on the joining of new members: "Firstly their ability to develop the democratic principles of the Pact; secondly if they were in a position to strengthen the security of the North Atlantic area". And in answer to a journalist about the category in which Portugal was included, he said: "he voted considering both classifications". Cf. **Telegrama nº 94, da Embaixada em Washington de 18 de Março de 1949, A.M.N.E., Arquivo da Embaixada em Washington, Pasta 150, proc. 70.**

<sup>70</sup> On this crisis it is important to see not only the recent bibliography (cf. note 54) but also the memoirs of their own political men. cf. Mário Soares, **Portugal Amordaçado**, Lisboa, 1974, p.p.163/204.





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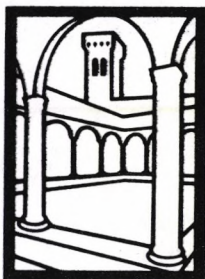
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